

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for carefully and thoughtfully examining the present application. By way of summary, Claims 1-16, 25, and 30-34 were pending in the present application and were rejected on various grounds in the Final Office Action mailed March 31, 2008.

Amendments

In the present amendment, Applicants have amended Claims 1-4, 10-12, 15, 25, and 30-34. Accordingly, Claims 1-16 and 25-34 remain pending.

Support for the amendments to the Claims may be found in the specification, for example, at paragraphs [0033] and [0042], and in FIG. 3A.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-16, 25, and 30-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Javanifard (U.S. Patent No. 5,483,486) in view of Furumochi (U.S. Patent No. 5,473,277). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended Claims 1-4, 10-12, 15, 25, and 30-34.

Claims 1-3 and 30

As discussed in the interview, Javanifard, alone or in combination with Furumochi, fails to teach or suggest all the features of amended Claim 1. For example, Javanifard fails to teach or suggest “a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator comprising a switching device configured to bypass at least one diode responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit and to the operational or test supply voltage, such that the switching device is configured to generate a first control signal,” as recited by amended Claim 1. Rather, Javanifard merely teaches a “voltage controlled oscillator (‘VCO’) [that] outputs a regulation signal REG.” Javanifard, col. 19:19-20, 26-29.

Furumochi fails to teach or suggest the features of amended Claim 1 not taught or suggested by Javanifard. Instead, Furumochi merely teaches a “constant voltage

generator circuit . . . for making fine adjustment of . . . transistors on the basis of external control signals.” Furumochi, Abstract.

For at least these reasons, Claim 1 is allowable over the applied art. Claims 2, 3, and 30 depend from Claim 1 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 2, 3, and 30 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 1-3 and 30.

Claims 4-9 and 31

Claim 4 has been amended to recite, among other things, “a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator comprising a switching device configured to bypass at least one diode responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit and to the operational or test supply voltage, such that the switching device is configured to generate a first control signal.” Claim 4 is believed to be patentable for similar reasons to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claims 5-9 and 31 depend from Claim 4 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 5-9 and 31 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 4-9 and 31.

Claims 10-14 and 32

Claim 10 has been amended to recite “means for generating a first control signal based upon the output of the clamp circuit, the means for generating comprising switching means configured to bypass at least one diode responsive to the output of the clamp circuit and to the operational or test supply voltage.” Claim 10 is believed to be patentable for similar reasons to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claims 11-14 and 32 depend from Claim 10 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 11-14 and 32 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 10-14 and 32.

Claims 15, 16 and 33

Claim 15 has been amended to recite, among other things, “a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator comprising a switching device configured to bypass at least one diode responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit and to the operational or test supply voltage, such that the switching device is configured to generate a first control signal.” Claim 15 is believed to be patentable for similar reasons to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claims 16 and 33 depend from Claim 15 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 16 and 33 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 15-16 and 33.

Claims 25 and 34

Claim 25 has been amended to recite, among other things, “a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator comprising a switching device configured to bypass at least one diode responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit and to the operational or test supply voltage, such that the switching device is configured to.” Claim 25 is believed to be patentable for similar reasons to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claim 34 depends from Claim 25 and is therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claim 34 is also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 25 and 34.

No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, the Applicants are not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. The Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject

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matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that the Applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

Conclusion

In view of the present amendments and arguments, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If some issue remains that the Examiner believes can be addressed by Examiner's Amendment, he is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for authorization.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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